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Taxpayers Deserve to Know Why Whitmer Paid for Robert Gordon's Silence

Freedom Fund Demands Governor Come Clean after Hush Money Revelations

LANSING, MI, March 2, 2021 – The Michigan Freedom Fund today demanded Governor Gretchen Whitmer publicly and formally come clean about the resignation of former Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon, and his time leading the department responsible for the state's response to COVID-19.

Details of the secret, taxpayer funded agreement came to light yesterday thanks to excellent reporting from the [Detroit News](#) that revealed Gordon was paid \$155,506 in taxpayer funds to keep quiet about the circumstances surrounding his abrupt January resignation.

"In Michigan, state government cannot be permitted to use tax dollars to facilitate coverups," said Tony Daunt, Executive Director of the Michigan Freedom Fund. "Governor Whitmer's use of public funds as hush money is outrageous and taxpayers deserve to know the truth behind this shocking revelation."

Critical questions the Governor must answer today include:

- 1) Does Governor Whitmer believe paying former cabinet officials six-figure hush money packages is consistent with her [January 3, 2019 executive directives](#) and other transparency pledges focused on assuring "a good, ethical state government?"
- 2) What precipitated Gordon's abrupt resignation?
- 3) Was the cover-up deal Governor Whitmer's idea? If not, who in her department suggested buying Gordon's silence with \$155,000 in taxpayer funds?
- 4) How many other similar deals has Whitmer authorized or otherwise known about for any other former officials? Will she provide a full accounting of each of them, including the names of those paid to keep quiet, when they were paid, and how much they were paid?
- 5) Will Whitmer sign an executive order this month requiring her office and that of the Lieutenant Governor to fully comply with Freedom of Information Act transparency requirements?

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